



It can be done, I think it ought to be done, because I would venture to say ever person in this room knows a family or knows a person who has been affected by a catastrophic illness and there is nothing that is more worrisome to the mind or has a more serious impact on the pocketbook than those kinds of tragedies.

So I think the Congress ought to move in that direction and move this year.

QUESTION: Thank you, Mr. President.

QUESTION: Mr. President, as you well know, there is an increasing controversy over CIA activities, both domestic and foreign. What measures would you take to create a balance between abuses resulting from secrecy in these activities and excesses of public revelation which may have, of course, hindered American effectiveness in foreign policy?

THE PRESIDENT: About three weeks ago I released the information as to what I would do to strengthen the intelligence community and at the same time prevent abuses by any of the intelligence community against American citizens. Let me outline very quickly what we have done.

In the first place, we set down criteria in a rather lengthy document of what intelligence agencies and individuals could not do -- specific guidelines. Those were lacking in the past and if those guidelines are not lived up to, then the persons responsible, individually or the head of an agency, are held accountable. Accountability is the real crux of how you can prevent abuses.

In addition, we have established an Intelligence Review Board which is composed of three individuals, three outstanding individuals -- former Ambassador Robert Murphy, Mr. Stephen Ailes and Mr. Leo Cherne. They have the responsibility of taking complaints from individuals or from the Inspector Generals of the CIA, the Defense Intelligence community, and to make an objective analysis of any abuses by individuals or an agency. Then in order to strengthen the intelligence community in an effective way, we have set up -- we have first gotten rid of about ten different boards which were overlapping in duplication and we have established an intelligence community committee headed by the new head of the Central Intelligence Agency and there are three of them that will bring together the intelligence community which is made up of the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency and three or four others, and they report to me directly.

When you come right down to it, the person in this area who has the final responsibility is the President and I believe that you have to hold people accountable and I am fully willing to assume that responsibility and I think it is the way it should be handled. If it goes wrong, the President ought to assume the liability. If it does well, then it is good for the country, but in the final analysis, the accountability comes right into the Oval Office of the White House with the President and I think that is the way to solve the problem.

UNCLASSIFIED

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Routing Slip

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2	DDCI		X		
3	S/MC				
4	DDS&T		X		
5	DDI		X		
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7	DDO		X		
8	D/DCI/IC		X		
9	D/DCI/NIO		X		
10	GC		X		
11	LC		X		
12	IG		X		
13	Compt		X		
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SUSPENSE

Date

Remarks:

Executive Secretary

19 March 1976

Date

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